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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

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SUBJECT: "The Case of Homemade Cheese." Information from the Farm Security Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Well, it looks like cheese - along with meat and butter - is going to stay on the ration list for sometime yet. On account of cheese being so easy to ship, and containing so much nourishment in concentrated form, the Government now plans to buy additional commercial stocks to ship overseas for European and Far Eastern food relief.

But many farm women over the country aren't a bit disturbed about good old American cheese remaining scarce on their grocer shelves! They have been making their own - and not only do they like their product but are finding it an excellent way to use surplus milk, save money on food expenses, and prepare nutritious meals. Not that there's anything new about the idea. It's about "as old as the hills". But numerous homemakers have been reviving the old-fashioned art, especially since commercial stocks started going overseas in increasing amounts during the war.

Let's hear today about the experiences of some women in FSA borrower families who have been making their own cheese. For example, there's Mrs. D. C. Lowman of Catawba County, North Carolina. Mrs. Lowman says she'd rather make cheese than mold butter, and her family of six - which includes three daughers named Faith, Hope, and Love - like it very much. The only equipment she had to buy was a fifty-cent dairy thermometer and a five-cent oyster can. She is one of a number of women in her community who have learned how to make cheese, through attending group demonstrations held by the local FSA home economist.

In Essex County, Virginia, Mrs. Linwood Balderson and several of her neighbors attended a "school" in the fall of 1940, and have been making their own cheese ever since. Mrs. Balderson uses the surplus milk from three cows on her farm, and so far has made 85 pounds.

(More)

A Weld County, Colorado woman says she seldom used cheese until she started making it herself. She thought it was just a tidbit to round out an already complete meal. Now she says she wouldn't be without it because she can use it with macaroni, in Welsh rarebit, cheese souffle, cheese fondue, and many other dishes to build a meal around. Also her children like it in their school lunches.

In Phillips and Valley counties, Montana, some farm housewives have organized a kind of "cheese council." They meet in each other's homes from time to time to swap experiences and information and, instead of sticking to the old standby - American or cheddar cheese - they have learned to make ten different varieties. At most of the meetings, the women eat pot luck lunch and try out some of their products on each other.

Much along the same line as the cheese council, a "neighborhood action group" in Richland county, North Dakota, has included cheese-making among its wide variety of activities. The women turn out a product that looks and tastes like "the bought kind" they say, yet they don't have to buy it and they find it an excellent way to use left-over milk.

Finally, there are the James Tuckers - Negro farm family of 15 members of Greensville county, Virginia - who make and enjoy their own cheese. Mrs. Tucker has been making her own cheese over since a demonstration was held in her home more than three years ago, and says she doesn't know what her family would do without it. When she first began to make cheese, she says she used an ordinary 5-quart oil can with top and bottom cut away for a mold, and a water-filled fruit jar for a press. Now she uses a "food presser" which she likes much better. She gets about $3\frac{1}{2}$ pounds from 4 gallons of milk. "All I do is follow my recipe," she says "and the main trouble after that is making my family wait till the cakes get ripe before they start eating them."

Speaking of recipes, if you yourself would like to try making some cheese, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has a bulletin which is "free for the asking." It's called "Making American Cheese on the Farm for Home Consumption," and you can get it simply by writing to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

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